



NEWS RELEASE

**STATE BOARD
OF EQUALIZATION**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: March 9, 2005

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**Hon. John Chiang, Chair,
State Board of Equalization's Office,
Offers Free Income Tax Return Preparation and
E-Filing Through April 15th**

There are just 37 days left! The deadline for filing your Federal and State income taxes is Friday, April 15, 2005.

"For the fourth year in a row, my office is proud to provide FREE Federal and State income tax preparation through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. Many of the individuals we assisted last year filed electronic returns for the first time and applied for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), because my office was available to help." said John Chiang, Chair, State Board of Equalization.

"Taxpayers can file their tax returns electronically through my office without paying burdensome tax preparation fees. Those individuals who file electronically generally receive their refunds in half the time of those who file paper returns, saving excessive interest and other charges taxpayers would incur by using more costly filing services"

The VITA Program offers free tax help for low to moderate income individuals (who earn less than \$36,000 a year). The EITC is a refundable federal tax credit that may allow qualified individuals and families who worked full or part time in 2004 and earned less than \$34,458 to qualify for a refundable tax credit of up to \$4,300.

The VITA program will be offered through Friday, April 15, 2005, in the downtown Los Angeles office. Those seeking assistance can schedule an appointment Monday through Friday, during the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Spanish language assistance is available on Tuesday and Thursdays. To schedule an appointment, please call (213) 239-8506.

Alternatively, VITA and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) sites are also located at many neighborhood community centers, senior citizen centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls and other convenient locations. To locate the nearest VITA site, call (800) 829-1040.

It is important that taxpayers bring all of their tax records which include: Form W-2 wage and earning statements from all employers; Form 1099s for interest, dividends and non-employee compensation; a copy of last year's Federal and State returns, if available; and other relevant information about income and expenses. Taxpayers should have all the required social security numbers for their dependents, any amounts paid for day care, and their bank routing numbers for direct deposit of their expected refund.

If you need further assistance or have any additional questions or concerns, please contact (213) 239-8506.

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